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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Wilson, Dr. Nelson, House

other names/site number

027-663-34096

### 2. Location

street & number 103 E. National Highway

N/A ☐ not for publication

city or town Washington

N/A ☐ vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Daviess

code 027 zip code 47501

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination  
☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of  
Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  
☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be consider significant  
☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☐ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. (☐ See continuation sheet for additional  
comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

☐ entered in the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined eligible for the National Register.

☐ See continuation sheet

☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.

☐ removed from the National Register.

☐ other, (explain:)

Wilson, Dr. Nelson, House  
Name of Property

Daviess County, IN  
County and State

## 5. Classification

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private  
☐ public-local  
☐ public-state  
☐ public-Federal

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)  
☐ district  
☐ site  
☐ structure  
☐ object

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	1	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	1	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

## 6. Function or Use

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: single dwelling

## 7. Description

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Queen Anne

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation	BRICK
walls	BRICK
	STONE: Limestone
roof	Asphalt
other	WOOD

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more sheets.)

Wilson, Dr. Nelson, House  
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## 8. Statement of Significance

### Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

### Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significant within the past 50 years.

### Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### Bibliography

(Cite the books articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

### Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination if individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey  
# \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record  
# \_\_\_\_\_

### Areas of significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

### Period of Significance

1896

### Significant Dates

1896

### Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

### Cultural Affiliation

N/A

### Architect/Builder

Gaddis, John W.

### Primary location of additional data:

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☐ University
- ☐ Other

Name of repository:

Wilson, Dr. Nelson, House  
Name of Property

Daviess County, IN  
County and State

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one acre

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

1	6
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Zone Easting Northing

3 

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Zone Easting Northing

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☐ See continuation sheet

### Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

### Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary E. Smith / Paul C. Diebold

organization \_\_\_\_\_ date 9-23-07

street & number 103 E. National Highway telephone 812-254-5660

city or town Washington state IN zip code 47501

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

#### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 Or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

#### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

#### Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Ralph and Mary Smith

street & number 103 E. National Highway telephone 812-254-5660

city or town Washington state IN zip code 47501

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance to the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**7. Narrative Description**

The Dr. Nelson H. Wilson House is an elaborate and well-preserved example of late 19<sup>th</sup> century Queen Anne architecture located in Washington, Indiana. Designed by Vincennes Architect, J.W. Gaddis for Dr. Nelson and Matilda M. (Campbell) Wilson, this dramatic two-story patterned masonry house built in 1893, features an irregular silhouette, beveled corners, ornamental brackets, rich fret work, and tall, paneled chimneys which exemplify the taste and ideals of the times. Dr. and Mrs. Wilson were married in 1889 and following Dr. Wilson's death in 1895 at the age of 51, the ownership of the house passed to the William Beck family sometime before 1900. The Beck family owned the home until 1978. The current owners are the fifth owners of the house having purchased it in 2001 and completing a 4-year restoration project in 2006 which included removing debris; re-roofing; electrical, HVAC, and plumbing updates; installing storm windows to protect the original wood windows; removing paint from the brick façade; repairing porches and the extensive wood trimming; new wallpapering and floor covering; and landscaping.

The house faces north and is located in a residential area on one corner of a city block at the intersection of Old U.S. Highway 50 and South East First Street in Washington (Photograph 1). The house presents a remarkable contrast to the nearby Washington Towers, a 1960s housing complex and the tallest building in Washington, which is located in the next block and visible as a backdrop when approaching the house from the west. The site includes a non-contributing brick garage/rental house building on the rear of the lot.

The two and one-half story house rests on a brick foundation, and has load-bearing brick exterior walls. The overall massing consists of a cubical two and one-half story core capped by a steep gable-on-hip roof, with asymmetrically placed gabled two and one-half story masses projecting from this core on the front and side elevations. The rear section is a one story masonry mass covered by a complex hip roof.

The front elevation faces north (photo 1). The first floor has a one story wooden porch with complex hip roof and a gabled entrance. Stone steps with stone buttress walls lead to the wood-floored porch. The main core of the house has a double door opening on the first floor, aligning with the porch entry gable. Above it is a window. The west portion of

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the front elevation is a chamfer-sided gabled mass. The chamfered walls extend from the first story under the front porch through to the second story, where wooden gable corners fill out the cut angle. Windows are single on each story on the chamfered walls and paired on the broader front face.

The east elevation (photo 4) shows the side of the cubic main core of the house, with a gabled projecting block set far to the south, so that it forms part of the rear of the tall portion of the house. Two windows in alignment, one on each floor, are set toward the front corner of the house. The long blank wall area to the south belies the location of the interior main staircase. The gabled mass has single windows on its north flank, one on each story, and the east face has single windows flanking a massive recessed panel chimney on each story. A plain, one story screened porch abuts the gabled section to the south, forming part of the rear of the house. There is a doorway and a single window opening under the porch.

The west elevation (photo 2) has paneled chimneys, one centered in the blank wall area, the other centered on the west face of a projecting gabled mass to the south. The gabled projection has chamfered corner walls with single windows on each story. The wooden gable corner structures are treated like those on the front elevation. A one story porch also abuts the south end of this elevation. This porch features original posts and ornamentation. A doorway and window opening are under the porch.

The rear or south elevation is one story high. The east half of the rear section projects several feet to the south from the west portion. The east half has two single windows, and the south wall, a single window.

*Exterior Architectural Details*

The house's chamfered wall corners and ornate porches are on the north and west sides (Photographs 1 and 2), which face U.S. Highway 50 and First Street respectively. On these sides are scroll-saw wood truss and bargeboard ornaments on the gables including the front including one at the peak of the hip roof. The large front gable has a similar truss and scroll-tailed bargeboard. The trusses have stick framing, sunburst panels, cut out scroll brackets, and pierced panels. In the interest of adding additional detail, the bargeboards are incised with outlined rectangles and bands. Outer corner portions of the

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gable are of vertical wood bead board that surrounds the brick gable end. Supporting the lower ends of the gable roof are ornamental wood brackets, formed from small whole cart wheels, and a short run of spindle frieze. These form true 90° corners which act as hoods over the second-floor windows in the second floor chamfered walls. The west elevation gable is similarly treated, as is the east gable, though it lacks the chamfered walls.

Porches on the north and west sides of the house are focal points. Ornamentation through the use of elaborate wood brackets, porch railings, and an elaborate spindle frieze between lathe-turned veranda posts--the last featuring halved cart wheels—provides rich detail. The wagon wheels and frieze have elaborately turned spindles, while the arches are scroll-saw flat wood elements. The west porch is similar to the front porch, except that its frieze has segmental wood arches and cut-out square panels. In 2004, the current owners installed new porch railings and under skirt panels, patterned after the deteriorated originals.

All the porches contain a checker-work wood pattern on the half-gable ends facing north, east, and west (Photographs 1, 2, and 3). These wood patterns contain alternately raised blocks of carved wood squares featuring an Eastlake-style floral pattern, fastened to standard vertical bead board. On the north-facing checkerboard pattern of the side porches, the Eastlake pattern is alternated with a Masonic cross pattern (Photograph 5). This Masonic cross pattern may have originated from the original owner, Nelson Wilson, or the architect, John W. Gaddis, who were both active Masons. It could also be interpreted as a Maltese Cross motif.

The porch on the southeast corner of the house was rebuilt by the current owners in 2004 (Photograph 4). This porch includes a trap entrance door to the cellar. Previous owners had enclosed this porch sometime before 1963; a photo of that date shows a turned post and enclosing screens. After opening the porch and finding all turned posts, railings, and other ornament to be missing, the current owners chose to leave the roof structure and original half gables intact and rebuild the posts, kick plates and wood screen frames in a simple style.

The house's eaves are open and have exposed scroll tailed rafter ends and a frieze of vertical board with picket ends. The roofing is 5-sided slate asphalt shingles, installed by the current owners in 2002, that replaced the original 5-sided slate shingles which were

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removed by previous owners sometime in the 1980s. Copper flashing, replaced by the current owners in 2002, trims the roof around the chimneys. The house has one roof skylight, not easily visible on the south side of the home (Photograph 3), which opens to a wood-floored room located off one of the second story bedrooms. Three of the four panels of the light contain original glass and the current owners re-sealed the skylight during the 2002 roofing project. The current owners installed galvanized round guttering in 2002.

The rear of the house, which faces south, contains a single story, tall hipped roof, which provides space for a small wood plank floor room with skylight which is located off one of the second story bedrooms. The current owners painted the wood plank floors and added plumbing in 2002 to convert this space to a laundry room.

The house has large wooden one-over-one windows placed between dressed limestone ledges and lintels on the first and second story. The lintels are chamfered on the lower edge and have corbels at the lower corners, so that they form window hoods. All the windows in the house are of original condition and protected by storm windows, installed by the current owners in 2002. On the second story of the house, the 11 large windows are centered above the lower windows and north entrance doors. The windows have original or original-styled hardware and many contain glass that appears to be of original construction.

A dressed limestone water table band is found at the base of the house on the north, east, and west sides (Photographs 2 and 4). The band is absent from the south side of the house (Photograph 3) and ends after wrapping around the southwest corner of the house. On the south side of the house, multi-coursed brick arches top the three basement windows. The limestone water table band tops the large single pane basement windows which are located below each of the houses' thirteen lower windows.

The basement windows, located below all the first story windows and at ground level in a wood surround box, also contain original hardware and wood. These windows are set inside a white painted wood box surrounded with 10-inch exterior wood sills and are located below the limestone band at the base of the house. The three arched basement windows on the south side of the house are also housed in a wooden surround box with a wooden sill.



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The red brick is laid up in stretcher bond with grey mortar and includes two decorative bands of brick around the entire house between the first and second story and between the second story and the attic. The slightly projecting bands are made of sawtooth-laid brick sandwiched by stretcher courses. In 2004, the current owners removed mauve paint from the house's exterior brick and completed a tuck-pointing project. Past owners had painted the house sometime in the 1980s. The *Daviess County Interim Report*, 1987, includes a photo of the house with painted walls. A photo in the 1943 publication, *A Memorial to William H. Beck and Sadie M Beck*, shows the house unpainted.

Two tall, paneled brick chimneys are located on the west exterior side of the house and a third paneled brick chimney is located on the exterior east side of the house (Photographs 2 and 4). Each of these large chimneys breaks through the roof plane; the east and west stacks that are part of gabled projections rise just behind the ornamental trusses and form elaborately paneled brick double stacks with sawtooth necking and multi-corbelled tops. The other west chimney is similarly treated. The house has one interior brick chimney on the south side of the house (Photograph 3).

The exterior of the house has foundation landscaping completed in 2005 and 2006 by the current owners. It includes varieties of flowers, shrubs, and trees used in the early 1900's including lilac, lily of the valley, hostas, rhododendron, azaleas, and hydrangeas. The remainder of the yard is landscaped with hostas, spirea, and lilac that complement the foundation landscaping. There are two non-operating hand water pumps found on the west side of the house, near the entrance to the kitchen, indicating that the house may have been constructed without any interior plumbing.

*Interior*

The interior of the house contains three large parlor rooms, a dining room, bathroom, and kitchen on the first floor and three large bedrooms, small sunroom, and bathroom on the second floor. The house has two staircases and one pull-down staircase added by the current owners in 2003 to allow access to the house's third floor which is unfinished.

All rooms have ornamental incised Eastlake style oak door and window surrounds and baseboards. Two tones of stain are used on the moldings and staircase. Moldings in all

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but two rooms retain the original stain and varnish finish; these two are the bathrooms, here the original moldings are painted. The oak wood trim varies from room-to-room in the detail of the upper corner blocks (Photograph 8). The interior doors are of pine and have two short panels topped by two tall panels. The current owners stripped and restained all doors in 2006. All doors and windows have the original Eastlake hardware in working condition. Most doors have one-light transoms, still operable.

Ceilings throughout the house were plaster on lath, however, the current owners covered the plaster with sheets of drywall in 2002. Water damage, left unchecked, had caused large portions of plaster to detach and many areas to fall. No ornamental work was lost in the repair since ceilings were flat plaster. Most walls are wallpapered, all major rooms were so treated from the start. When the current owners replaced soiled and deteriorated wallpaper with Victorian style reproduction papers in 2002-2003, they discovered that the walls have never been painted. The first man to hang wallpaper in the house left his signature in several rooms of the house. To the left of the double door main entrance, an intentionally missing portion of wallpaper which reveals the signature of the wallpaper hanger, dating his work to either January or June of 1893 (Photograph 6). This date is different than the 1896 date recorded in Daviess County records for the construction of the house. However, it is known that Dr. Wilson died here in 1895, so, the paperhanger's date is plausible.

Hardwood floors are found in the first floor hallway, the three parlors, and two upstairs bedrooms. The remaining floors are wood plank. Several areas of the upstairs plank flooring hide original gas lines for lighting. Current owners covered the plank floor rooms with carpet or vinyl flooring in 2003.

The main entrance to the home from East National Highway is a straight concrete sidewalk that reaches from the street to the porch steps. The four original limestone steps are flanked by short stone walls with a leaf medallion motif. The current owners added a fifth step below the original four in 2005. The double front doors are of pine and have beveled glass lights in the upper two-thirds and a four-panel cross design on the lower part. The rectangular transom fills the width of both doors and is a single pane of etched glass filled with scrolls, leaves, and linear designs. The inside surround of the front doors is typical of most throughout the house: machine grooved and incised trim boards, with cyma transition pieces, and plinth or corner blocks. Corner blocks are incised with a

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molded disk. The front doors have an additional pediment or short top frieze of molded disk-squares.

Upon entering the front doors, a 20-step bracketed open staircase with a 90 degree curve leading to the second story is on the left (Photograph 7). The stair rail has a molded hand rail, turned and incised balusters, and a massive, elaborately turned newel post. To the right is the entrance to the front parlor and directly in front is a hallway leading to other rooms of the house.

Two parlors are located on the west side of the house (Photograph 8). The north front parlor room contains a north-facing four-window bay opens to a center west parlor, and can be separated with the house's tall pocket doors. The doors and door hardware are in original condition although previous owners have attempted to refinish the doors sometime in the 1990's, causing the finish to have a streaked appearance. The northwest parlor does not contain a fireplace, however, an exterior chimney is located in the west wall (not visible). Current owners added a reproduction gas light fixture with three glass globes in the center of ceiling in this room, and installed reproduction wallpaper on the walls and ceiling in 2003.

The center west parlor (Photograph 14) contains a cast iron fireplace, painted an ivory color by the current owners in 2004 (Photograph 9). Original tile, a green pattern, surrounds the fireplace. It is flanked by single windows set in forty-five degree angled walls on either side. This room also has double pocket doors on the north wall, surmounted by a short frieze of corner block disks; a door to the west parlor, and a door opening to the south to the dining room. The dining room door is missing and the current owners speculate that it was reused in another location, specifically the first floor bathroom or closet located off the east parlor. The electric chandelier hanging in the center of the room was present in 2002, when the current owners took possession of the house. It is one of only two chandeliers present at that time and the current owners restored it in 2003. Also in 2003, the owners papered walls with a reflective gold motif and painted the ceiling an off white color. Hardwood floors in this room slope about one inch from west wall to outer east wall, possibly due to initial settlement.

A short hallway from the center west parlor leads to a third east parlor room, now used by the current owners as a television viewing room. This hallway contains a small cedar-

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lined, walk-in closet on the south side of the hallway, located beneath the staircase. The cedar interior of this closet was painted by the current owners in 2004. The entrance to this short hallway from the east parlor room contains an archway with wood keystone, the only one found in the house (photograph 15). The arch is finished on both east and west faces. This east room contains a second cast iron fireplace, painted a red color by the current owners in 2004 and located on the chimney breast which is centered in the east wall. This fireplace has the original tile flooring which is in very poor repair. Windows flank the mantel and chimney breast; the surrounds on the windows closest to the chimney are cut to fit on one side. The walls are finished with reproduction paper and borders and the ceiling is painted off white. The room also contains one of the two remaining brass gas wall light fixtures, and this fixture is positioned on the north wall near the north door which opens to the front entrance hallway. A window is located on the north wall, near the northeast corner of the room.

A bathroom and second walk-in closet are located off this room, both of which appear to have been added sometime after the house construction was completed... The southwest closet door's Eastlake corner block crowns, facing into the east parlor, are different than the crowns on the other doors in that room and match those of the kitchen doors and windows. There is no ornamental trim on the inside face of the closet door. The southeast bathroom door trim and baseboard are the same as the remainder of the house, but are painted a creamy white color. This bathroom contains a claw-foot tub, stool, and vanity made from an old dresser. It is wallpapered in period-style paper with hummingbirds, has an off white ceiling, and vinyl flooring installed by the current owners in 2004. On the exterior side of this bathroom, off the east parlor, a cupboard of the same size as a window is inset into the exterior wall, adding further proof that modifications were made to add bathrooms to the original floor plan. Research attempts have failed to reveal if the house was constructed with interior plumbing.

Returning to the center west parlor and exiting the room through the south doorway, one enters the dining room (Photograph 13). This room contains the same woodwork with Eastlake style moldings, corner blocks and crowns as the rest of the house. On the west wall, a pine four panel door and a window both open to the west porch. The transom of this door is etched with a reduced scale version of the same leaf and scroll design as the front door transom. On the east wall, there is a built-in four door Eastlake style oak cabinet with the same wood trim, corner blocks, and ornaments found on the windows

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and doors. The cabinet is eight feet high, contains six shelves, and has four two panel doors. Beside it to the south a pass-through counter, accessed on the kitchen side by a vertical sliding wooden door, connects to the kitchen. Both sides of the small door opening are trimmed out per other openings in the house. Beneath this pass through in the basement is a chimney with cleanout; it is therefore unknown if the cabinet and pass-through are original to the house.

A door leading to a second staircase, having the original steep steps and original hand railing, is located in the northeast corner. This door is placed so close to the east wall that the trim was omitted from the side against the wall. The entrance to the kitchen from the dining room is located in the southeast corner of the dining room. This door is also missing and the current owners suspect that it was moved to the closet or bathroom in the east parlor. There is a south window in the dining room, placed in the center of the south wall. The ceiling is painted off white and a reproduction brass gaslight fixture with five globes is in its center. The wallpaper in this room is reproduction Victorian style, with a top border. The plank floor is carpeted. Both carpet and papers were added in 2003-2004.

The kitchen (Photograph 16) was completely refurbished by previous owners sometime between 1978 and 2000. The current owners were not able to find any clues as to the original layout of this room and added updated plumbing, modern appliances, and built in cabinets to the kitchen in 2003. Features include a cabinet island, floor-to-ceiling cream color painted cabinets with glass doors and glass knobs, and vinyl flooring. Two windows are on the south wall flanking either side of a chimney breast.

Going to the second floor of the house from the main entrance hallway, the open stringer staircase runs north-south against the east wall and turns at the top to the west (Photograph 11). The turned spindle balusters are stained alternately light-dark and the string is decorated with applied floral ornamental brackets. The upstairs of the house boasts a large landing at the top of the front staircase. Around the landing is the same wood railing, with alternately stained spindles, that is used on the staircase (Photograph 10). Moldings replicate those of the first floor. A sitting area above the front entrance hallway opens to a north bedroom on its west side. In this sitting area are two windows, one facing north and a second facing east. Near this door way is the second of two original or early brass gaslight sconces. When the current owners were completing work on the house in 2004, the wide plank floors in the landing revealed old gas lines, which

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appeared to fuel lighting for the house. In this part of the upstairs, the ceiling contains a crown molding. The molding, painted by both current owners in 2003 and the previous owner, is painted the same color as the ceiling. It appears to have been added at a later date as it has rather crude cut-outs for the Eastlake style ornamental window and door moldings. Centered in the ceiling is a reproduction gaslight fixture with three glass globes facing up and three globes facing down.

The north bedroom has the same window arrangement as found in the north parlor on the first floor. There is an exterior chimney on the west wall, but it has no mantle or projection from the wall. This room has a closet on the south wall and a portion of this room, on the south side, was taken to accommodate the bathroom on this floor. Hardwood floors run diagonally and have been covered with polyurethane to preserve their condition. The ceiling was painted an off white color, the wall papered with a blue toile pattern, and a brass ceiling fixture of unknown age installed on the ceiling in 2003.

At the south end of the landing and to the south of the top of the main staircase is the south bedroom (Photograph 12). This room is directly above the east parlor and contains the same window arrangement – one on the north wall and two placed on either side of the chimney projection on the east wall. This room contains a wall post near the door for a gaslight fixture, but this fixture was missing when current owners took possession of the home in 2002. Again in this room, the windows are set against the protruding chimney wall so that the interior trim of the windows is missing on the chimney side. The current owners carpeted this room in 2004, covering the wood plank floors. There is a small shelved closet on the west wall. Also in 2004, the current owners added period-style wallpaper of a red and beige design, painted the ceiling off white, and mounted a brass light fixture of unknown age to the center of the ceiling.

A sunroom is located on the south side of the room and the entrance contains a doorway with transom frame but a blank panel instead of glass, due to the height of the ceiling in the sunroom. The sunroom contains wooden plank floors and four window original steel skylights. This room has plaster walls, which are painted and two entrances to the attic. Moldings are like those of the rest of the house. The attic entrance on the east features an original door and hardware. The west attic entrance has an old door salvaged from another building and new hardware, installed in 2004. Since that year, current owners

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have used the sunroom as a laundry room. Also at that time, the owners floored a portion of the attic for additional storage.

Leaving this south bedroom and turning west, away from the stairway, the hall has three doors – one to the north, one to the west, and one to the south.

The north door opens to a small full bathroom, added sometime after initial construction by intruding into space of the north bedroom. The carved ornamental woodwork in this bathroom is painted, but is in the same pattern as elsewhere in the house. During rehabilitation of this bathroom in 2003, the current owners found hardwood flooring from the north bedroom under the bathtub on the north wall, further validating that the bathroom was an addition to the original plan.

The west door opens to a west bedroom. This bedroom is located directly above the center west parlor. In this room, as in the center west parlor, the west windows are placed symmetrically with the chimney wall projection in the center, and the angled walls with center-placed windows are set on either side. This room has no fireplace. On the north wall is a closet. The floor in this room is hardwood and was cleaned and covered with polyurethane by the current owners in 2006. This room contains a small post in the wall near the door for a gaslight fixture, but the fixture was missing when the current owners took possession of the house in 2002. Wallpaper in this room is not period in spirit. Current owners painted the ceiling off white, installed a ceiling fan, and added the paper in 2004.

The south door opens to a landing to the original steep staircase leading down to the dining room. Inside this staircase landing, the Eastlake vertical surround boards are omitted to conform the trim to the space limitations. At the bottom of the staircase on either side of the door, the trim is plain. Above this landing is a trap door, installed by the current owners in 2002. It leads to the attic.

The attic is unfinished and contains a limited amount of floor covering, with exposed joists being the norm. There is one window to the north and the current owners placed a heating and air conditioning unit for the second floor in the southeast corner of the attic. The attic has much headroom due to the roof pitch. A wooden vent is located in the small gablet at the apex of the roof, allowing air circulation in the attic.

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*Garage*

The one story brick structure on the rear portion of the lot was in part a rental house or living quarters (photo 20). Part of the building appears to date from the time of the house, and has segmental arched windows and doors. A definite seam in the brick divides the west and east halves of the structure, the west section appears to have been added as garage bays at a later date. The entire west side of the building has a frame wall and recent overhead garage doors. It is unclear whether part or all of this half existed prior to 1940, and how much was altered to accommodate autos. The garage is non-contributing.



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**Statement of Significance**

The Dr. Nelson Wilson House in Washington, Indiana is eligible for the National Register under Criterion C for its architecture and as the work of John W. Gaddis, prominent Vincennes, Indiana architect of the late 1800s and early 1900s. Gaddis combined Queen Anne and Eastlake styles in the design of this impressive two-and-one-half story brick house. The house was rated "Outstanding," the highest rating, in the Daviess County Interim Report. One of few truly remarkable examples of Queen Anne architecture in Washington, the Wilson House also illustrates the rise of Washington, Indiana as a regional rail and commerce center at the turn of the century.

Washington, Indiana had its origins in the settlement disputes between Euro-Americans and native tribes during the War of 1812 era. Settler David Flora built a timber fort as a stronghold at what would become the corner of Main and East Second in 1812. Flora and fellow pioneers Isaac Galland and George Curtis called their original plat of the town "Liverpool," and its layout included a little less than fifty acres of lots, dedicated streets, and a town square. The Daviess County Commissioners awarded the title of county seat to Liverpool in 1817 and town officials changed the community's name to Washington the same year.

County seat status and placement on a main road to Vincennes brought travelers and business to Washington, Indiana during the first decades of the town. By 1817, Vincennes was an eighty-five year old settlement, with access to the Wabash River, long established trade connections, a library, university, and impressive brick architecture. State construction of the Wabash & Erie Canal bolstered the town's economy in the early 1850s. Canal engineers planned a "cross-cut" that ran in a line from Terre Haute to within a mile of Washington. The canal would then generally follow the course of the West Fork of the White River south for a distance before cutting cross-country towards its termination at the Ohio River in Evansville, Indiana. This route bypassed Vincennes, and the canal was in operation along its full length by 1853.

Washington would come to rival Vincennes after the Ohio & Mississippi Railroad acquired right-of-way and built a line through southern Indiana in the 1850s. By 1857, the line was complete through Washington and Vincennes, but the railroad chose Washington as the location

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of a major rail yard and machine shop. In 1889, the line constructed a massive roundhouse, offices and other buildings, and rail yards covering 100 acres. With thousands of jobs added to the economy, Washington became a regional market town and significant rail service town. Shipping of agricultural products, rail industry, manufacturing and county seat business brought growth, wealth and working man's jobs to Washington well into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Wilson House is an important example of a regionally significant architect's work. John W. Gaddis (1856-1931) attended University of Illinois in the 1880s, where he studied engineering and architecture. He opened an office in Vincennes in about 1886, and designed his family home in town in 1890. Gaddis designed several residences in the Queen Anne style, including his own home in Vincennes, the Shriver House in Flora, Illinois (1893), the Daviess County Orphanage and Home in Washington, Indiana (1893; demolished, 2002). Later, Gaddis designed Shadowwood, the Wharf Estate in rural Knox County, near Vincennes, in 1917. Shadowwood's design is clearly Neo-Classical Revival or Colonial Revival in inspiration.

Some of his most notable commissions include courthouses. Gaddis relied on the Romanesque Revival style for early courthouses, like the Wayne County Courthouse in Fairfield, Illinois (1891). The Crawford County Courthouse in Robinson, Illinois (1897) is likewise a brick and stone Romanesque Revival building. Gaddis also designed the Christian County Courthouse in Taylorville, Illinois (1902), another Romanesque example. Perry County, Missouri, on the Mississippi, also commissioned Gaddis for a courthouse. This too is a brick and stone Romanesque Revival building. Indiana courthouses in Putnam County (1903), Huntington County (1906) and Clay County (1914) were a clear change toward Neo-Classical Revival / Beaux-Arts inspired architecture. Gaddis continued this trend with the design of the Bell County Courthouse in Pineville, Kentucky (1919).

Other public buildings included libraries, city halls, schools and jails. Commissions include the Case Library in Baldwin, Kansas (Neo-Classical Revival, 1907); Olney Carnegie Library in Olney, Illinois; and Clarksville High School, Clarksville, Tennessee, and the Knox County, Indiana Sheriff's House and Jail (1903). Lodge and church buildings were also part of Gaddis' portfolio. His Vincennes practice included projects as far away as northern Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Kansas and Missouri. The Wilson House is an important example of his earlier works.

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The Queen Anne style developed in the United States following the Civil War. Interest in Romantic architecture had manifested itself in American renditions of Gothic Revival, Italianate, and French Second Empire architecture. At the Centennial Exposition of 1876, British architects were invited to design pavilions of the Queen Anne period. English manor houses and buildings of the original 1700s Queen Anne era were a curious adaptation of Renaissance elements to late Gothic forms. The British pavilions of 1876 were a free interpretation of the style. Interest in the style came at a time of rapid industrialization. Ironically, the hand-carved intricacies of original style would be made affordable and popular through machine carving of wooden elements. By the late 1880s, the Queen Anne style was the most popular form for housing throughout the United States.

Builders utilized Queen Anne ornamentation on otherwise vernacular housing, on small cottages, and for more complete examples, larger homes. The style is primarily residential. Full examples of the style are asymmetrical in plan and elevation. Exteriors are picturesque and feature offset gables, bays, or towers. Wooden porches were large, full-width structures that might wrap around one side to another. A variety of surface ornament was typical of the best examples: different types of wood siding, fishscale wood shingle, built-up cut out panels and turned wood spindles and posts. Interiors included large stair halls, elaborate stained woodwork, and rooms that open into one another.

The Wilson House clearly exhibits all characteristic Queen Anne traits. The home's exterior is asymmetrical; the front elevation includes an offset, two story projecting chamfered-wall gabled section, large wooden porch, massive and picturesque roof silhouette and a profusion of ornament. The porch detail is especially exuberant. It includes pierced wood panels, lathe-turned spindles, flat-cut arches, incised bargeboards, and machine-cut "cookies." Many of the home's details recall a briefly lived architectural influence from furniture designs of Charles Locke Eastlake. His furniture and interior decorating design concepts centered around a less frivolous and more structural expression of joinery, woodwork, and use of natural wood finishes. In architecture, rectilinear incised work, corner joints such as wood blocks and an emphasis on "stickwork" show Eastlake influence. Some Wilson House details, such as stick framing in the roof truss ornament and interior woodwork show Eastlake influence. The Wilson House is somewhat unusual in that it is brick rather than wood frame. Even so, Gaddis elaborated the

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masonry walls with sawtooth coursing, recessed panels, massive chimneys, and contrasting stone sills and lintels.

The Wilson House is certainly among the best examples of Queen Anne architecture in Washington, Indiana. The house is one of a handful of elaborate examples of Queen Anne architecture in Washington, Indiana. The Carnahan House, 511 E. Main (NR, 1991) is a fine example that leans toward Romanesque Revival influences. A house at 312 NE 5<sup>th</sup> is very similar in elevation to the Wilson House, but has less elaborate porches and less stickwork. Again, the house at 16 W. Walnut is similar in design to the Wilson House. A house at 1314 Bedford Road is another variation on the hipped main block/gabled extensions format, again in brick construction. A fine wood frame house at 706 E. Walnut includes a tower and wrap-around porch.

The Wilson House is noteworthy for its degree of integrity. It exemplifies the richness of the style with the scroll-saw ornaments on the gables and the use of elaborate brackets, porch railing, and soffit grilles between veranda posts—featuring halved cart wheels. The home features the distinct characteristics of Queen Anne houses, namely, the beveling of the corners of the projection toward the street, which thus creates a bay. The ornamental brackets of the house, containing whole cart wheels, support the lower ends of the gable roof and the rich fret work, restless contour of the building, and the tall, banded chimneys make the house both irregular and interesting. These qualities exemplify the Queen Anne architectural style, making the Dr. Nelson Wilson House a locally significant example of this style of architecture of the late 1900's. Thus, the house meets National Register Criterion C.

Dr. Nelson H. Wilson practiced dentistry in Washington from circa 1890 until his death in 1895. He was born in Jefferson County, Indiana on November 12, 1844 and died in Washington, Daviess County, Indiana on April 26, 1895 -- four days after suffering a paralyzing stroke while dining at his handsome (also referred to as elegant) home at 103 East National Highway in Washington.

Dr. Wilson was frequently referred to as Dr. N. H. Wilson in local newspaper advertisements of his dentistry practice during the early 1890's. Prior to opening his practice in Washington, he married Matilda M. Campbell, in 1889. Matilda "Tillie" Campbell was a lifelong resident

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of Washington, born September 15, 1850. She died August 11, 1914 in Washington at the home of her sister and brother-in-law, Dr. and Mrs. F.M. Harned.

Dr. Wilson practiced dentistry for 26 years. His Washington office was located in the Wilson Building on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street. He previously practiced in Wichita, Kansas and Huntingburg, Indiana.

He served in the Federal Army as a soldier and hospital steward during the Civil War. After the war, he pursued education in dentistry, having graduated from Miami College, Cincinnati and from the Nashville Dental College with high honors.

He was a member of M.E. Church and a Mason. According to information found in the newspapers of the times, Dr. Wilson had business interests in Washington and Huntingburg. His brother Dr. S.L. Wilson also lived in Washington. Nelson is described as being closely identified with the business interests of Washington and a responsible and valuable citizen.

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Newspapers

"John W. Gaddis Dies Saturday After Illness," *Vincennes Sun-Commercial*, Vincennes, Indiana. Sunday, September 6, 1931.

"Dr. N.H. Wilson obituary," *The Gazette*, Washington, Indiana. May 4, 1895.

"Mrs. N.H. Wilson is Dead," *The Washington Democrat*, Washington, Indiana. August 11, 1914.

"Wilson-Campbell wedding," *The Daviess County Democrat*. May 4, 1889.

**Section 10 Verbal Boundary Description**

Lots 46 and 47 in Campbell's Addition to the City of Washington. Also part of Location 131, Township 3 North, Range 7 West, more particularly described as follows, to-wit: Beginning at a point 12 feet South of the Southwest corner of Lot 47 in Campbell's Addition to the City of Washington, Indiana, and running thence South 120 feet; thence East 90 feet; thence North 120 feet; thence West 90 feet to the place of beginning, the same being an unplatted part of said City of Washington.

**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the lot currently associated with the Wilson House and historically associated with the Wilson house during its period of significance.

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**Photograph Log**

All photographs are of:

Dr. Nelson H. Wilson House

Daviess County, Indiana

Mary E. Smith, Photographer

All digital images are stored on CD's in the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Division  
of Historic Preservation and Archaeology in Indianapolis, Indiana.

Photo #1 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse1

View of Front Elevation camera facing south

Date: June 3, 2007

Photo #2 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse2

View of West Side Elevation camera facing east

Date: June 2, 2007

Photo #3 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse3

View of South Elevation camera facing north

Date: June 2, 2007

Photo #4 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse4

View of East Elevation camera facing west

Date: June 2, 2007

Photo #5 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse5

View of Porch Detail camera facing south

Date: June 3, 2007

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Photo #6 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse6

View of Wallpaper Hangar Signature in Entrance Foyer camera facing east

Date: July 8, 2007

Photo #7 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse7

View of Staircase camera facing south

Date: June 3, 2007

Photo #8 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse8

View of First Floor Parlors and Dining Room camera facing south

Date: July 8, 2007

Photo #9 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse9

View of Cast Iron Fireplace in Parlor camera facing west

Date: June 3, 2007

Photo #10 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse10

View of Second Story Landing camera facing north

Date: June 24, 2007

Photo #11 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse11

View of Staircase Turn from Second Story Landing camera facing south

Date: September 24, 2007

Photo #12 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse12

View of Second Story Bedroom and part of Attached Room with Skylight camera facing south

Date: September 24, 2007

Photo #13 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse13

View of Dining Room camera facing north

Date: September 24, 2007



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Photo #14 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse14

View of Center West Parlor camera facing south west

Date: September 24, 2007

Photo #15 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse15

View of Wood Trim in Center West Parlor, Hallway Arch, and Wood Trim in East Parlor camera facing east

Date: September 24, 2007

Photo #16 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse16

View of Kitchen camera facing west

Date: September 24, 2007

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IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse17

View of North Front Porch camera facing southwest

Date: September 30, 2007

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View of Gable, Chimney, and Ornamentation on West Side camera facing east.

Date: September 30, 2007

Photo #19 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse19

View of Gable, Chimney, and Ornamentation on North Side camera facing southeast.

Date: September 30, 2007

Photo #20 of 20

IN\_DaviessCounty\_NelsonWilsonHouse20

Garage/rental house, looking north

Date: January 14, 2008



Nelson Wilson House, Photograph #1



Nelson Wilson House, Photograph #2



Nelson Wilson House, Photograph #4



Nelson Wilson House, Photograph # 7



Nelson Wilson House, Photograph #8



Nelson Wilson House, Photograph #9



Nelson Wilson House, Photograph #15



Nelson Wilson House, Photograph #17



Nelson Wilson House, Photograph #19